DICTIONARY

OF THE

ASANTE AND FANTE LANGUAGE

CALLED TSHI (TWI)

BY

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SECOND EDITION, REVISED AND ENLARGED

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Preface to Second Edition.

The first edition of the present work — commonly called 'The Tshi Dictionary' — published in 1881, has for a number of years been out of print. As the book was much in demand by both Europeans and educated natives, it was decided that a new edition should be issued. Unfortunately, financial difficulties, the uncertainty concerning a new script, and an accident which befell the editor, delayed its appearance.

The Dictionary is based on the Akuapem dialect, which was reduced to writing about 1838, and became afterwards the literary form.

The material consists, for the most part, of the contents of the former edition. To these have been added numerous words, meanings, and phrases gathered from the printed Tshi literature and from manuscripts; also contributions sent in by Rev. A. Jehle, and the Editor's linguistic collection which he brought home with him from the Gold Coast. The greater part of this material as well as the original work has been revised here with the assistance of Rev. D. E. Akwa. — In order to keep price and size of the book within moderate limits, not all the material available has been inserted. For the same reason some of the Appendices also have been omitted.

Of the Akuapem dialect not many words will be found wanting; which cannot, however, be said of the other dialects. Regarding this deficiency, and in other respects as well, there is still room left for improvement.

The different dialects have, as far as possible within the limits, found consideration. Words more or less local and not yet in general use, have, as a rule, been marked as such by indicating the dialect to which they belong (i. e. by placing initials after the words).

A word or expression styled obsolete in one district may be still in use in another.

The use of the words in sentences is illustrated by definitions, expressions from daily life, proverbs &c. Being contributed by natives, all these examples are idiomatic, presenting the genuine manner of expressing thoughts. For further illustration the collection of proverbs and other books (p. XI seq.) are frequently referred to.

Foreign words adopted in Tshi have been marked as such by indicating in brackets the languages from which they are taken. — New words derived

from words already existing in the language, are marked by a dagger (†); a certain number of modern terms have not been admitted, because not as yet sufficiently approved.

The *orthography* employed is that proposed by the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, and approved by the Gold Coast Government in 1927.

The alphabet:

a b d dw ɛ Ɛ e f g h hy i k m n ŋ Ɔ ɔ Ɔ o p r s t tw u w y; *cf.* pp. XVI seq.

Nasalization of vowels is indicated by the nasal mark ~ (e. g. sã), *lengthening* by doubling the letter (e. g. daa).

The letters ạ ẹ ọ w̆ (= wy) ă ĕ &c. are only used for exact distinction.

The heavy-type leading words are usually provided with *tone* marks; sometimes, however, the tones are indicated only in the added phrases. Where the accents are wanting, it is from uncertainty. — *Cf.* pp. XXVIII seq.

A *hyphen* placed after prefixes (e. g. o-su, e-ti, a-yefadeɛ) denotes that they are dropped in certain cases.

As to the *arrangement*, the words follow each other in the alphabetical order of their initial consonants, disregarding the prefixes. *Cf.* p. XXI and XXXI seq. Words either similar or related to each other are placed together. Thus e. g. **su, sũ** are followed by nouns with prefixes: **o-sũ** (joined to **sũ**, from which it is derived); **e-su; nsu, osu, asu;** then **sua, sŭa, sũa** and **nsua, o-sŭa, o-sŭã, o-suaa** follow; then the various compounds of all these, intermixed with derivations by suffixes and new verbs, according to the alphabetical sequence of the letters, as sŭã-bise... sũafo,... nsu-akyi, sũaŋ,... sŭaw, su-baŋ &c. — Of *compounds* the constituents are marked out by a hyphen, or the primitives are added in brackets. — Of nouns formed by the suffixes **fo** or **ni, wa** (**ba**) or **ma** (p. XXI, II), and of those compounded with **-de** and **-sɛm** (= ade, asɛm), both kinds being almost inexhaustible, only a limited number has been admitted; the meaning of such words may be easily found by referring to the simple words. — Of *verbs* the primitive sense is given first, and the figurative and free senses follow.

Directions for the use of the Dictionary are given on p. XXXI seq.

In the orthography both the *full* and the *shortened writing* (p. XIX, *c*) have found consideration. — The forms in Fante and Akem, different from those in our literature, have been added in many instances; in other cases analogy will guide those who are particularly interested in these dialects.

Synonyms have been added wherever they seem to be required.

The *derivation* of many words is given within brackets.

The *Appendices:* The Table of Gold Weights may require rectifications for the Fante and Akem districts. — To save space, some Appendices have been omitted; among these the Geographical Appendix, which contains many names that could no more be identified.

To save space, frequent use has been made of *abbreviations;* on which see pp. VIII seq. — All words not marked by *v., a., adv., conj., interj.* are usually *nouns.* Nouns are marked by *n.* only in a few cases to distinguish them from other classes of words. Verbal nouns derived by the palatal suffix (e, i) are marked by *v. n.;* many simple or compound nouns marked by *inf.* are likewise verbal nouns. — Of *verbs* the transitive and intransitive are rarely marked by *tr.* & *intr.,* because most of them are used in both ways. Part of verbs have occasionally *contin., pret., perf.,* &c., added to them. — On *con.* = connected form, *s.* p. XXIX seq.

The Editor herewith expresses his hearty thanks for assistance obtained: to Rev. A. Jehle for his contributions and the reading of the second proofs; to Dr. E. Rapp for the preparation of Appendix F; to Rev. D. E. Akwa for his help in revising the Tshi text; to Revs. E. Nothwang and W. Stamm for the verification and correction of rare vernacular expressions; and last not least, to Mrs. J. Staehelin, who kindly perused most of the English part of the manuscript.

He concludes with the wish that also the New Edition may prove a means for a thorough acquisition and understanding of the Tshi language.

Basel, June 1933.

J. Schweizer.

e. Various Marks or Signs.

& and. — *&c. et cetera,* and so on, and the like.
.. between two parts of a verbal phrase indicate the place of an object to the *v.* or of an attributive *n.* or *pron.;* e. g. so .. mu, *to help* (as in òso no mù); or, *to lay hold of* (as in òso nó mù).
... stand for three or more omitted letters, syllables or words.
= *equal to.*
> *more* or *larger,* i. e. of a wider sense, *than* ...
< *less,* i. e. of a narrower sense *than* (the following word).
† dagger, indicates newly coined words, see Preface p. VI.
§ paragraph, section. — :,: repeat.

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Introduction.

§ 1. Name and Territory of the Language.

Tshi, or Twi, is the language prevalent in the Gold Coast countries between the rivers Asini and Tanno on the W. and the Volta on the E., and extends even beyond this river; its southern boundary is the sea-coast, while the upper course of the Volta, and the Kong mountains are its northern limits. That is, roughly, the area of the old Asante empire when it had its greatest extension. Formerly Guang dialects were spoken throughout the Gold Coast, but in the course of time they were, in most places, superseded by Tshi. — The number of people who speak Tshi may be estimated at about 2 millions; and the language is steadily gaining ground.

Twi, rarely Etwi or Otwi, is the form used in the vernacular. It is pronounced like *'Chwee'*, ch and w being uttered simultaneously. The vowel i has a rising and falling tone, thus: î or íi. Twi probably denotes *'polished, refined';* from twi, *to rub, polish.* The form **'Tshi'**, (a modification of the older spellings Tyi, Oji, Otyi), is, as a rule, employed in English. — Another name of the language is **Akán** or Akáŋ, probably meaning *'foremost; genuine';* from kaŋ, *first;* e.g. ɔyɛ Okanni, *he is a born* or *genuine Tshi man.* 'Akan' is used in a wider sense (*a*) for the dialects of Akem, Asante, Adanse &c. (*s.* § 2), and (*b*) in a narrower for those of Akem and Asante only.

The name 'Twi' being used not only by the natives themselves, but also by the Accras and tribes to the east of the Volta, (in the form 'Otshui'), it has been retained as the generic appellation of the language. — On the names **Amina, Fante, Akan,** see Gr. p. XVI.

§ 2. Dialects.

The dialects which have found consideration in the Dictionary, may be comprehended under the following three names: 1. Akan, 2. Brõŋ or Kãmãnã, 3. Fante.

1. The **Akan** dialect is considered to be spoken purest (*a*) in *Akem;* but by its "dainty and affected mode of expression" (e. g. the frequent ẹɛ & ọɔ, where most other dialects have simply ẹ & ọ, as, adeɛ, aseɛ, kɔreɛ, ɔboɔ, soɔ, = ade, ase, kɔe, ɔbo, so), it appears less suited to become the common dialect of all Tshi tribes. — (*b*) The dialect of *Asante* agrees in all essentials with that of Akem, only the pronunciation is "broad and hard (tetĕrɛɛ denneennŋ)", e. g. people say "kĕrɛ" instead of "kyerɛ", - whilst in Akem it is "soft and delicate (bɔkɔɔ frenkyemm)". — The other districts in which Akan is spoken are Adanse, Asen, Daŋkira, Twiforo or Twuforo, Akwam, (Wasa) - all these with little deviations from Akem and Asante, and Akuapem. — (*c*) The dialect of *Akuapem,* derived from Akem and Akwam (an Akan dialect of old standing) and having points of contact with Brõŋ and Fante, became about 1842 the literary form intelligible to all the other